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ABSTRACT

Children need loving bonds with caring adults to develop trusting relationships, solid self-esteem, and a readiness to learn. This book draws on caregivers' personal experience, as well as interviews and conversations, and questionnaires completed by child care providers to explore the issue of love in child care settings and how family child care providers bond with children in their care and soothe parental fears that their own ties with their children will be weakened. Chapter 1 considers the nature of love for other people's children, including its role in high quality provider-child relationships and risks and taboos associated with such bonds. Chapter 2 examines the formation of the parent-caregiver relationship, considers the role of traditional attitudes toward women, and describes characteristics of satisfying parent-provider relationships. Chapter 3 discusses special circumstances such as working with parents of children with disabilities and gives suggestions for dealing effectively with such circumstances. Chapter 4 looks at redesigning the traditional family circle, maintains that a deep caring relationship between parents and providers is an element of quality care, and examines benefits and problems when personal and professional lines become blurred. Chapter 5 examines how poor quality care teaches negative behavior patterns, damages self-esteem, and ultimately shapes society; and notes the importance of reexamining attachment in the child care setting, revising traditional child care models, and supporting provider-child bonds. Chapter 6 presents recommendations from providers, parents, and other sources for acknowledging the importance of love, including revising provider training, developing strategies to teach parents, and educating other professionals. Contains 71 references. (KB)

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